

## ***Step 2 – Commercial Construction/Remodeling Project Plan Review***

Purpose of this step – ***Commercial*** project plans are reviewed to ensure compliance with the City of Wichita’s adopted codes, ordinances, regulations and policies for subdivision development, multifamily residential (all except one and two-family residential construction/remodeling), and commercial development, construction and remodeling. The review focuses primarily on public safety issues, building and fire construction codes compliance, compliance with final development or subdivision plans/plats, the developer’s effects on existing and proposed public infrastructure, ensuring sound engineering principals, and the overall quality of development. Although the staff reviews plans for these issues, the ultimate responsibility for the construction documents rests with the project design professionals hired by the owner.

***Construction/remodeling project plan review minimizes field changes*** because it necessitates interpretation of standards prior to construction occurring, thereby saving time and expense for both the city and the developer.

This step will also carry forward Planning Commission and/or City Council stipulations or conditional approvals of plats, subdivisions, and zoning cases as required by other Departments or processes (e.g., traffic/street improvements; subdivision drainage plans; zoning Community Unit Plans, Planned Unit Developments, Conditional Uses, Protective or Zoning Special Overlays; etc.), as well as general Unified Zoning Code and Historic Preservation Ordinance requirements. Approvals necessary from outside agencies such as FEMA, Kansas Dept. of Health & Environment (KDHE) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) may also be required at this step prior to issuance of a building permit.

For many construction projects, primarily commercial new construction and large additions, separate engineered drawings must be designed and submitted to the Public Works/Engineering Office for public utility improvements constructed under private contract in public easements or rights-of-way (commonly referred to as “private utility projects”). This includes water lines, storm drain/drainage systems, sanitary sewer and paving improvements. In addition, some of these privately contracted public facility installations that are on private property

and not in public easements or rights-of-way (project fire service lines or fire hydrants, or project sanitary or storm sewer pipe larger than a certain pipe size), are also required to submit engineered plans for a “private utility project” to Public Works/Engineering for review. Submission of such project plans may occur prior to or concurrently with submission and review of a building permit application. However, in nearly all cases, the “private utility projects” must be submitted and approved prior to release of any building permits. Detailed information on “Private Utility Projects” plan review fees and approval processes may be obtained by calling the Public Works/Engineering Office, 455 N. Main St., Wichita, KS 67202 - (316) 268-4235.

### **Preliminary Commercial Project Review:**

Preliminary reviews benefit everyone by minimizing problems in the review process and expediting plan review time. They may be scheduled prior to submission of the building permit application, complete project plans, or payment of any required building permit or plan review fees.

- There is no charge.
- Meetings must be pre-scheduled with the Office of Central Inspection Plan Review Staff, (316) 268-4477.
- Preliminary meeting hours are: 9-11 a.m. or 2-4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday & Friday, or anytime Tuesday and Thursday.
- Conceptual plans or sketches are required. It is helpful to provide one copy for OCI files.
- Who may attend? Owner/s, contractor/s, architect, engineers, plans examiner, fire prevention staff or any other relevant department staff.

### *Helpful Hints:*

*Items that are consistently found as deficiencies in preliminary or formal plan review, or that cause significant delays in permitting processes are as follows:*

- Property is not properly zoned or has not been platted at the time of building permit application. Some building additions and expansions to existing structures on unplatted lots can also require platting of a property. While this is an infrequent occurrence, a requirement to plat and/or to re-zone the property could delay building permit issuance for several months or more. Always check to make sure that property is properly zoned for the proposed building and use, and that the property is appropriately platted before preparing building plans. Zoning determinations can be obtained from OCI at (316) 268-4479 or from the Metropolitan Area Planning Department at (316) 268-4425, and should be obtained as early in the building planning/development process as possible. Call the Metropolitan Area Planning Department at (316) 268-4421 for more detailed information on platting and zoning/re-zoning.*
- Inadequate drainage plans and drainage plans that lack adequate spot elevations to determine drainage flow and/or ADAAG compliance.*
- Inadequate or absent impervious area calculations.*
- Inadequate or no solid screening included on plans as required by the Unified Zoning Code (UZC) or by a Zoning Overlay or Special Approval (such as a Community Unit Plan, a Planned Unit Development, a zoning Conditional Use Approval, or a zoning Protective Overlay).*
- No landscaping, landscape buffering or screening (or any landscape plans) as required by the Landscape Ordinance or the Zoning Code, or by a Zoning*

*Overlay or Special Approval (such as a Community Unit Plan, a Planned Unit Development, a zoning Conditional Use Approval, or a zoning Protective Overlay). This is a common omission on major remodeling projects where the value of remodeling is more than 50% of the Sedgwick County Real Estate Appraiser Office's appraised existing building value, thus requiring compliance with the Landscape Ordinance and landscape buffering; for building additions that exceed the Zoning Code 30% expansion threshold, requiring building lot compliance with the Landscape Ordinance and landscape buffering and screening; and/or for new parking lots or parking lot expansions on arterial or collector streets, or across from residential areas, for existing development.*

- *Nothing noted or shown on plans to indicate placement of new, required fire hydrants (primarily for new commercial construction or larger commercial expansions/additions).*
- *Required "Private Utility Projects" not completed or submitted to Public Works/Engineering for review/approval.*
- *Proposed zoning use, aesthetic design controls, building size/coverage, or building setbacks as specified by a Zoning Overlay or Special Zoning Approval (that are more restrictive than the underlying zoning district or platted setbacks) are not in compliance with the overlay or special approval. This could force delays in building permit issuance until zoning Administrative Adjustments or Special Overlay/Zoning Approval Amendments are completed. Delays could be from as little as about two weeks to as much as 60-90 days. For more information on zoning administrative adjustments and amendment processes/procedures, call the Metropolitan Area Planning Department (MAPC), 455 N. Main St., Wichita, KS 67202, at (316) 268-4421.*

- *Fire Stops and Draft Stops are not indicated on the submitted plans in appropriate locations, are not shown at all, or are lacking sufficient design detail/specification.*
- *Fire resistive assemblies are not shown on the submitted plans in sufficient detail or with approved design/test numbers.*
- *Submitted plans indicate inadequate hard-surfaced toilet room finishes in high occupancy use classifications (assembly, restaurants, bars, theaters, etc.).*
- *Lack of proper safety glazing and/or lack of detail about the type of safety glazing materials on submitted plans.*
- *Absence of, or inadequate detail/indications on submitted plans with regard to required emergency and exit lighting.*
- *Inadequate ADAAG maneuvering clearances, and lack of detail on submitted plans to indicate ADAAG-required slope on sidewalks, exterior access aisles and parking spaces/loading aisles.*
- *Inadequate location of required ADAAG parking spaces with respect to distance from building entryways.*

### **On Site Preliminary Commercial Project Review:**

When the project involves an existing building, and plans are not available, on-site reviews can be performed.

- \$30 per hour, minimum charge one-half hour. Must be pre-paid
- Must be pre-scheduled
- Hours of: 9-11 a.m. or 2-4 p.m. Monday, Wednesday & Friday, or anytime Tuesday and Thursday
- Who may attend? Owner, Contractor, Architect, Plan Examiner, Fire Prevention staff or any other relevant department staff.

### **OCI Commercial Project Plan Review Overview:**

The OCI Commercial Plan Review Section has primary responsibility for coordinating the plan review process and issuing a single, coordinated Plan Review Write-Up that outlines any deficiencies and/or required project plan revisions. OCI's plan review will include the following personnel/departments:

- Building Plans Examiner, OCI
- Fire Prevention Division, Wichita Fire Department
- Public Works Department, Subdivision Engineering (primarily for water, sanitary and storm sewer, fire service or fire hydrant extensions/connections, stormwater management design/detention/drainage, and any required "private utility projects")
- Traffic Engineering (primarily for driveway placement/location, any required traffic control or site access road improvements, and general provisions of the City of Wichita Access Management Policy)
- Public Works Department, Stormwater Management Division (primarily for flood control and pollution discharge management at construction sites)
- Health Department (primarily for food service establishments and day care centers)

- Water Department (primarily for grease interceptors associated with food service)
- Planning Department (primarily for zoning and historic preservation issues)
- Other Agencies as necessary

**Codes/Policies Utilized by OCI Plans Examiner:**

- 2000 International Building Code, with local amendments (City Code Title 18)
- Local Existing Buildings Rehabilitation and Change of Use Code (City Code title 18.44)
- 2000 International Fire Code, with local amendments (City Code Title 15)
- 2000 International Mechanical Code, with local amendments (City Code Title 22)
- 2000 Uniform Plumbing Code, with local amendments (City Code Title 21)
- 2002 National Electrical Code, with local amendments (City Code Title 19)
- Wichita-Sedgwick County Uniform Zoning Code (City Code title 28.04)
- Wichita-Sedgwick County Subdivision Regulations (City Code Title 28.05)
- Airport Overlay District Code and Airport Hazard Zoning Code (City Code Titles 28.07 and 28.08)
- City of Wichita Landscape Ordinance (City Code title 10.32)
- Federal ADA Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities
- Kansas Accessibility Act (ADA)
- Federal Fair Housing Act
- Local Stormwater Pollution Prevention Ordinance (City Code Title 16.32)
- Local Grease Interceptor Ordinance for food service (City Code Title 16.24)
- Local “pre-treatment” sewer disposal of industrial wastes (City Code Title 16.20)
- Local Flood Damage Prevention Code (City Code Title 27)
- Local Access Management Policy (driveway access/traffic circulation)

- Local Alcohol and Cereal Malt Beverage Licensing Standards (City Code Title 4)

*Helpful Hints:*

- *OCI Building Plans Examiners utilize a checklist called the “OFFICE OF CENTRAL INSPECTION PLAN REVIEW CHECKLIST” in performing their review. While many of these items may not apply to some projects, it is good to check all the items on the list to make sure there are no surprises. A copy of this checklist is attached in Appendix B.*
- *For drinking establishments, nightclub and/or taverns uses, the business owner/operator will also have to obtain State of Kansas and City of Wichita alcohol or cereal malt beverage sales licenses. This is generally about a 4-6 week process. Also, any establishment that derives more than 50% of its food, alcoholic drink, and/or cereal malt beverage sales revenue from the sale of alcoholic drinks and/or cereal malt beverages, will be classified as a drinking establishment, nightclub or tavern under the Wichita-Sedgwick County Unified Zoning Code, and NOT as a restaurant. Zoning regulations and requirements for drinking establishments, nightclubs and taverns are significantly different and much more restrictive than zoning regulations for restaurants. If the project owner/operator believes that they may classify as a drinking establishment, nightclub or tavern instead of a restaurant, they may wish to contact the OCI Zoning Office at (316) 268-4479 or the Metropolitan Area Planning Department at (316) 268-4421 to get additional zoning and licensing information before beginning construction or remodeling work.*

**Initial OCI Commercial Project Plan Review Section Time Frames:**

The time to review plans can vary greatly. Factors that impact review time include completeness and accuracy of submitted drawings, current backlog, size of job, type of work involved, etc. “Priority” and “A” category projects are assigned to an OCI Plans Examiner when they are officially logged in. Category “B”, “C” and “D” plans are assigned on the Friday following project plan submittal. Target initial project plan review time frames, by project valuation category, are:

- “Priority” Projects - Valuation of \$25,000 or less – Three business days from the application date.
- “A” Projects - Valuation between \$25,001 to \$75,000 – Seven calendar days from application date
- “B” Projects - Valuation between \$75,001 to \$250,000 – 12 calendar days from assignment date
- “C” Projects - Valuation between \$250,001 to \$2,500,000 18 calendar days from assignment date
- “D” Projects - Valuation over \$2,500,000 – 25 calendar days from assignment date

### **Completion of OCI Project Review:**

When the review is complete, the plans will either:

- Be stamped as “Approved” by the Building Plans Examiner, and made ready for permit; or
- Require changes prior to a permit being issued. A project plan review write-up will be issued detailing all required changes. Generally, no further Office of Central Inspection plan review work will be done on the project until the changes have been made or required plan revisions have been submitted, although “conditional” permits may be issued to start construction activity as outlined in “Step 3 – Permit Phasing”.

### **Required OCI Project/Plan Review Revisions Review:**

- Required plan revisions must be made by the original design professional
- Construction drawings/plans revision review should be completed by OCI Plan Review staff in accordance with the following schedule:
  - Valuation of \$25,000 or less – One business day from the revision submittal
  - Valuation between \$25,001 to \$75,000 – Three calendar days from revision submittal
  - Valuation between \$75,001 to \$250,000 – 4 calendar days from revision submittal
  - Valuation between \$250,001 to \$2,500,000 – 6 calendar days from revision submittal
  - Valuation over \$2,500,000 – 8 calendar days from revision submittal
- If revisions are approvable, building permit can be issued

### **Appeals of Office of Central Inspection Plan Review Requirements:**

- All applicants have the right to appeal interpretations of plan review requirements or to propose alternate methods of construction.
- Appeals may first be made to the Superintendent of Central Inspection (Building Official), Office of Central Inspection, 455 N. Main St., Wichita, KS 67202; (316) 268-4460.
- If not resolved through the Superintendent of the Office of Central Inspection, appeals may be made to one of four building or trade construction boards, depending on the item being appealed. All boards meet on a monthly basis, and requests for appeals or reviews by the boards must be submitted to OCI at least ten days prior to the board meeting. Applications and requests may be made by calling 268-4461 or 268-4460. The pertinent appeals boards and their current monthly meeting dates are as follows:
  - Board of Code Standards and Appeals (BCSA) for Building and Fire Codes - Meets on the first Monday of each month
  - Board of Electrical Appeals for Electrical and Elevator Codes – Meets on the second Tuesday of each month

- Board of Appeals of Plumbers and Gas Fitters for Plumbing and Sewer Codes – Meets on the first Wednesday of each month
- Board of Appeals of Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Warm Air Heating for Mechanical Code and solid fuel burning equipment – Meets on the fourth Thursday of each month
- The pertinent Board may review interpretations of Codes, and alternate materials and methods of construction
- The Boards do not have the authority to waive any specific requirements of the Codes

#### **Expiration of OCI Project Plan Review:**

- Expires 180 days from date of completion of initial OCI Project Plan Review Write-Up
- 180 day extension may be granted with written request from applicant
- If the plan review expires, a new plan review fee will be charged for further/new review

#### **Building Permits:**

##### ***Fees:***

- Building permit fees are based on project construction cost. You may call the OCI building permit desk at (316) 268-4461 to obtain plan review and building permit fees that are based on project valuation and the current OCI building permit fee schedule
- Basic Plan Review fee is 65% of the base building permit fee.

##### ***Progress Prints/Plans:***

- Construction may start prior to final plan submission.

- New buildings or additions only
- Additional 50% of plan review fee charged
- Minimum drawings must include site plans and detailed footing and foundation plans
- Must also submit “Conditional Permit Request” form
- Reviewed within 3-5 business days, depending on project valuation/size

***Conditional Building Permit:***

- Construction may start prior to completion of OCI project plan review or resolution of required project requirements and/or plan review revision submittals
- Available for new buildings or additions only
- Additional 25% of plan review fee will be charged if issued prior to OCI target date for completion of “OCI Project Plan Review Write-Up”
- Full set of project plans required
- Submission of a conditional permit request form is required
- Up-front “Conditional” permit requests will be reviewed within 3-5 business days, depending on the project valuation/size

**NOTE:** See “Conditional Permit Request” and “Office of Central Inspection Conditional Permit Checklist” forms in Appendix B.

***Shell or Speculative Building Permit:***

“Shell” or “speculative” building permits are often requested and issued for buildings that are basically unfinished on the interior, awaiting future tenant leases and finish. While this is allowable and not uncommon, it is just as imperative to provide detailed site and building construction plans (less interior finishes and detailed floor plans) before obtaining “conditional” or full building permits. It is critical to determine where and how utilities will be brought to and into the building, and to detail these items on the utility site and building plans.

Special considerations and installations are typically required for items such as sewer and electric service connections. For speculative shell building permits, the project owner will be required to submit a “Speculative Shell Building Acknowledgement & Conditions for Approval” form with the shell building permit application (see form in Appendix B), to acknowledge that all additional, required plans will be submitted to OCI for review, approval and required permitting before work begins on the construction or finish of any tenant lease space not included on the original, approved shell building plans.

***Full Building Permit:***

- Must be issued for any/all projects
- Full set of project plans required
- No additional fees
- Issued when project plans and all required revisions are reviewed/approved by OCI Plan Review staff

***Licensed Contractor Required:***

- All building construction requires a City of Wichita licensed building contractor, as well as licensed trade contractors (as applicable to the project work)
- Only the building contractor or authorized representative can pick up the building permit

***Revisions to “approved plans” after permit has been issued, but before project completion:***

- Revisions are required for any changes affecting exiting, wall configuration, fire or life-safety construction or structural design/installation
- Must be submitted to OCI for review (no additional fees charged)